



FREE

Santa Monica Daily Press

April 23-24, 2005

A newspaper with issues

Volume 4, Issue 139

DAILY LOTTERY

SUPER LOTTO

7 13 15 28 31
Meganumber: 9
Jackpot: \$27 Million

FANTASY 5

10 18 25 30 39

DAILY 3

Daytime: 7 8 3
Evening: 8 9 7

DAILY DERBY

1st: 03 Hot Shot
2nd: 11 Money Bags
3rd: 05 California Classic

RACE TIME: 1:41.40

NEWS OF THE WEIRD BY CHUCK SHEPARD

■ Richard Arredondo, 18, and two pals had to be rescued by sheriff's personnel in California's San Bernardino National Forest on Feb. 5 after getting lost while mountain biking; on Feb. 6, they went back in to retrieve their bikes, but again got lost and had to be rescued.

■ According to a study released in the Journal of Advanced Nursing in February, only 3 percent of people with nipple or genital body piercings sought professional health-care advice despite the fact that two-thirds eventually experience problems ranging from infections to interruptions in urinary flow.

TODAY IN HISTORY

Today is the 113th day of 2005.
There are 252 days left in the year.

The Jewish holiday Passover begins at sunset.

April 23, 1564, is believed to be the birthdate of English poet and dramatist William Shakespeare; he died 52 years later, also on April 23.

THOUGHT OF THE DAY

Whenever I feel blue,
I start breathing again.

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Carolyn Sackariason/Daily Press

City crews and firefighters work on Friday morning to turn off a damaged fire hydrant, which created a 30-foot-tall geyser in front of Britannia Pub on Santa Monica Boulevard.

Bar patrons go with the flow

BY CAROLYN SACKARIASON
Daily Press Staff Writer

DOWNTOWN — A 30-foot-tall geyser sprang up Friday morning after a tractor-trailer clipped a fire hydrant in front of Britannia Pub on Santa Monica Boulevard.

It took city crews and Santa Monica firefighters nearly 20 minutes to stop the water from gushing out of the broken

hydrant, which was run over by a truck turning right out of the alley between the Third Street Promenade and Fourth Street onto Santa Monica Boulevard. It took another 20 minutes for crews to replace the hydrant.

About 15,000 gallons of water spewed from the geyser, said Gil Borboa, the city's water resources manager. Water rushed down Santa Monica

See **SPOUTING OFF**, page 8

Police question Pico leader's stop at Samohi

BY RYAN HYATT
Daily Press Staff Writer

CITY HALL — Santa Monica's top cop is demanding answers from school officials after one of their board members brought an alleged gang member to the Santa Monica High School campus this week.

Santa Monica Deputy Police Chief Phil Sanchez on Thursday spoke to the school board on behalf of Police Chief James Butts, Jr., inquiring about the nature and appropriateness of school board member Oscar de la Torre's Wednesday visit to the Samohi campus, at which time he brought two guests — one of whom police suspect to have had significant gang affiliations last year.

Sanchez read a report written by two officers — both assigned to the school because of the recent unrest there — which details how de la Torre and the two men entered Samohi during lunch. The officers' report said one of the men was identified as "Big Lucky," from Santa Monica's 17th Street Gang. Sanchez said SMPD last year received specific information about "Big Lucky" being a "shot caller" for the gang, ordering young gang members to go into other cities and commit assaults.

The police weren't able to identify de la Torre's other guest, but he is said to have been wearing a blue "Joker" tank top and blue jeans.

See **SAMOH**, page 4

City taking its time to find the right planning director

BY CAROLYN SACKARIASON
Daily Press Staff Writer

CITY HALL — Officials aren't taking any chances when it comes to filling one of the city's most high profile jobs, which in recent years has also proven to be one of the most controversial.

The search for a new planning director, the post vacated by Suzanne Frick on March 31, will be a slow and arduous process to ensure the right match is found, said City Manager Susan McCarthy, who will ultimately make the decision.

"We are not going to rush the process," she said. "It's a very important job. We are sinking a lot of time into the search and our strategy."

City Hall will hire a recruitment firm to conduct a national search in an effort to locate the most appealing candidates. Previous recruitments for top administrators have cost about \$25,000. However, the cost for this latest search is dependent on what officials ask of the firm in terms of networking, outreach and advertising, said City Hall spokeswoman Judy Rambeau, adding the search could cost between \$15,000 and \$25,000.

The hiring and arrival of a new planning director comes at a pivotal time for Santa Monica, as officials begin overhauling a massive set of laws which control how the city will be developed for

See **RIGHT STUFF**, page 5

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Nap, then decide, Taurus

Santa Monica Daily Press



JACQUELINE BIGAR'S STARS The stars show the kind of day you'll have:
★★★★-Dynamic ★★★★★-Positive ★★★-Average ★★-So-so ★-Difficult





ARIES (March 21-April 19)
★★★★★ You find that events and feelings build throughout the day. You might question others' attitudes, especially a family member who might want to rain on your parade. Excitement surrounds romance and affection. Tonight: Go along with others' requests.



TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
★★★ Take your time and evaluate. You might not be in the best mood, but you can clear out a problem or two. Negativity could ultimately cause you a problem when you least expect it. Loosen up when dealing with those in your daily life. Tonight: Nap and then decide.



GEMINI (May 21-June 20)
★★★★★ Don't allow someone to stop you in your tracks. Don't permit your finances to cause a hassle either. Don't get hung up in the material world. Emphasize feelings. Tonight: Dance the night away.



CANCER (June 21-July 22)
★★ You could be causing your own problems. Someone might be pushing in a certain direction. Loosen up and honor your family values in a domestic matter. You can let go and enjoy yourself. Tonight: Get some rest before making any decisions.



LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)
★★★★★ You make an effort to deal with others. A negative thought could color your day, if you allow it to. Loosen up and permit more creativity to flow into your life. A partner or close friend surprises you. Be spontaneous. Tonight: A force to be reckoned with.



VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)
★★★ How you structure your financial obligations could make a big difference. Expenses could be higher than you had anticipated. Think in terms of gains through accepting others. A partner could behave in a most unexpected manner. Tonight: Treat someone you care about.



LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)
★★★★★ You're all smiles, feeling as if nothing can go wrong. An authority figure might make a demand you don't feel comfortable with. Loosen up and understand what others expect. Plans change. Don't fight the inevitable. Tonight: The lead player.



SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)
★★★ Take in more information before declaring a situation one way or another. Use confusion as an indicator that you need to know more. A child or new friend could surprise you with his or her actions. Tonight: The later it gets, the better time you have.



SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)
★★★★★ You find happiness in groups and with others. You might look at life a lot differently because of a sudden insight or opening. Don't worry too much about someone close. You might need to work on being more flexible. Tonight: Stay with the crowds.



CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)
★★★★ All eyes turn to you, whether as a role model or for help figuring out a problem. You're on top of your game. Be as diplomatic as possible with a difficult associate or loved one. A surprise communication charges your day with electricity. Tonight: In the limelight.



AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)
★★★★★ Take an overview and detach, if possible. Your perspective could change if you become less triggered and more anchored. Walk in another's footsteps, if possible. A financial risk could pay off. Be reasonable with your risk-taking. Tonight: Follow the music.



PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)
★★★★★ Someone close to you is far more in control than you realize. Let this person do what he or she wants. You might surprise someone close with your actions. If you can, think before doing something a bit wild. Tonight: Let someone treat you to a special time.



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LOCAL



COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Get 'green' on the Internet

By Daily Press staff

Where does that water running down your street end up? Are you in need of some water-efficient landscaping tips? Does your child need to write a paper on the local environment?

All of those questions and more can be answered by visiting Santa Monica's new Environmental Programs Division Web site: www.smeprd.org. The Web site's official launch coincided with the celebration of Earth Week, held April 18-22, and Earth Day, April 22.

The goals of the site are to provide information on city services and programs; to raise public awareness, and to encourage residents to network and get involved in their community by linking them with local organizations and resources. There also are opportunities for the nature lover or parent to learn more about outdoor activities and local field trips.

Site visitors can learn how to save money by participating in city programs that help save resources. They include downloadable coupons for recycled motor oil changes, free programs that enable residents and businesses reduce their utility costs, and incentives for building "green."

The site also offers announcements regarding opportunities to get involved with current environmental initiatives in Santa Monica and the Southern California region, such as workshops, regional seminars and conferences, and community events.

"The Web site isn't only about environmental issues," said Dean Kubani, Sustainable City coordinator for Santa Monica. "It's also about providing resources and opportunities for people to come together to improve their community, both locally and globally."

A section on education supports the process of bringing information about the environment into everyday decision-making processes at home, at work or in the classroom. The site also links to the Santa Monica Public Library and creates a one-stop shop for researching environmental issues.

Visit www.smeprd.org to learn more.

Fiesta to be staged by the sea

By Daily Press staff

Spend a day near the beach this weekend at Canyon Charter School's 111th Annual Fiesta and Silent Auction on Sunday, April 24, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at 421 Entrada Dr. Throwing a fiesta is a time-honored tradition at the school because the event dates to 1894. Back then, the library was a one-room schoolhouse on the Marquez family land grant, the area's original rancho. Fiesta now symbolizes the celebration of the canyon's rich Latin heritage. It's also how this highly ranked public school raises funds to enhance the instructional program with additional activities.

There will be mariachis and a tasting of local chef Joe Miller's south of the border cuisine. The playground will be transformed into an amusement park. The rides include a giant 45-foot Ferris wheel, a Go-Gater roller coaster, a pirate ship swing and a 70-foot obstacle course. There also will be game booths like mini basketball, duck races and milk bottles. Children also can do arts and crafts, have their faces painted, pet animals and ride ponies. Attendees can wander through a Mercado that has fiesta-themed items for sale. Other favorites include skee ball and a cake walk, where winners take home desserts. Game tickets can be redeemed for prizes.

Shoppers can flip for prizes of their own as the school's newly refurbished auditorium plays host to a silent auction. More than 500 items are priced as low as \$5 and as high as \$5,000. Any money paid in excess of the retail value is tax-deductible. Some of the items include a martini party for eight at Gotham Hall; two tickets to the world premiere of "Bewitched," a weekend stay at Santa Monica's Fairmont Miramar Hotel and a kid-sized basketball jersey signed by Shaquille O'Neal. Look for a Segway electric scooter and other goodies to be auctioned off

See BRIEFS, page 12



SURF REPORT

On Saturday, we're expecting the NW to back off towards waist high, and we have some SSW swell due from the southern hemisphere. Most south-facing breaks will likely average only waist- to chest-high sets. Standouts can expect to see some sets running chest- to head-high at times.

Sunday, most south-facing breaks see more consistent sets in the waist- to chest-high range.

Today the water is:

58°

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	LOW TIDES				HIGH TIDES			
	Morning	Height	Evening	Height	Morning	Height	Evening	Height
SATURDAY	3:31	-0.1	3:10	0.9	9:35	4.3	9:25	5.7
SUNDAY	4:08	-0.5	3:36	1.2	10:18	4.1	9:51	5.9
MONDAY	4:49	-0.7	4:03	1.6	11:06	3.8	10:22	6.1
TUESDAY	5:35	-0.8	4:32	1.9	12:00	3.5	10:58	6.0
WEDNESDAY	6:28	-0.8	5:03	2.3	1:08	3.2	11:40	5.8
THURSDAY	7:31	-0.6	5:43	2.7	2:40	3.0	N/A	N/A
FRIDAY	8:07	-0.4	6:24	2.9	3:02	2.8	12:35	5.4

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RESPONSES ON PAGE 7.**

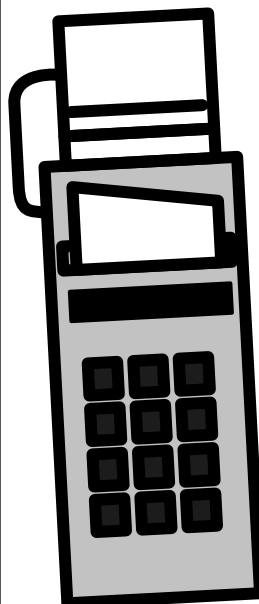


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Pico leader's guests have police up in arms

SAMOHI, from page 1

Several tattoos identifying his gang affiliation were visible, according to Sanchez.

De la Torre contends his guests are reformed gang members who he brought to campus in an effort to steer students away from the gang life.

"The police were stereotyping based on how someone looked," de la Torre said. "The individual in question is a businessman. He started an apparel clothing line. He does have a past, but he is reformed, and that's what makes him relevant to the situation. The whole intent was for these individuals to share their transformation."

"Their story is just as valuable because young people will listen to someone who has experienced and lived it," de la Torre said.

At least six fights broke out at Samohi during the lunch hour on Friday, April 15, requiring a school-wide lockdown in which three police departments were called to the scene to secure the campus. Thirty to 40 students stopped fighting, but wouldn't return to class until police threatened to make arrests, school officials said.

While about two dozen concerned students and parents attended the school board meeting on Thursday and demanded an action plan from school officials as a result of the lockdown, Butts demanded to know what school administrators intend to do about de la Torre's visit to campus.

The officers' report stated that de la Torre and his guests walked through the quad area as students were getting out for lunch. A Samohi administrator informed assistant principal Greg Runyon that some black students were upset over de la Torre's two guests, who appeared to be Latino gang members, according to SMPD officers on campus. Rumors were spreading about weapons being on campus and assaults expected to take place during the school day, according to Sanchez, who read from the officers' report detailing the events.

According to the report, 25 black students were standing in a group watching de la Torre and his guests. Some of the students were visibly upset and said they were "going to call their people, too."

Runyon approached the officers, and together they attempted to speak with de la Torre, who ignored their calls for him, according to Sanchez. Police confronted de la Torre, who according to the officers' report, said he had granted permission himself for his guests to be on campus. Runyon responded by saying that it was only allowable for de la Torre to be on campus, not his guests, according to the report.

De la Torre continued to ignore the police, even after an officer warned his presence was going to start a riot, Sanchez said. De la Torre agreed to leave the Samohi campus after police threatened his arrest, according to the report.

In his letter to the school board, Butts requested its members to explain its policies regarding non-student gang members being allowed on campus and urged the school board to react to de la Torre's behavior.

School board members and administrators on Thursday didn't react to the letter, stating it was an item for discussion not

on the agenda.

De la Torre said the individuals he brought to campus were there to deter students from considering a life of gang activity and crime. He said any other suggestions by the police could be grounds for a lawsuit, unless their allegations were supported with evidence.

Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District Superintendent John Deasy said it's typical procedure for school board members to notify administrators when they come to campus.

De la Torre said he and his guests checked in when they arrived at Samohi, and that was how police were able to identify his two guests.

De la Torre said he didn't communicate with senior Samohi administrators to inform them of his intentions because he said he didn't realize he needed to. He said when he came to school for a student leadership discussion on Monday, Samohi administrators said they were glad he dropped by and he expected the same treatment on Wednesday.

De la Torre said he also was unaware of rumors on Wednesday of there being weapons and an assault expected on campus.

Deasy wouldn't comment on whether there would be an official reprimand for the way de la Torre handled Wednesday's incident.

Deasy said de la Torre has not been part of Samohi's official mediation process since he was invited to the campus on Monday. Deasy said outside community agencies are already working with Samohi administrators.

SMMUSD school board president Emily Bloomfield said de la Torre's Wednesday visit to Samohi most likely didn't have the impact he hoped for.

"What happened with Oscar was good in intention, but an error in judgment," Bloomfield said. "The school board has not discussed the issue and figured out how to put it on the agenda, but I'm sure we will."

Bloomfield said she encourages all community members to help address issues at Samohi, not excluding de la Torre.

SMPD Lt. Frank Fabrega said the department would have preferred de la Torre work collaboratively with police personnel and school officials in quelling gang and racial tensions at Samohi. He added bringing non-students who appear to be Latino gang members on campus could incite black students.

"The issue is how many students know that he is a school board member or an official? They have no idea who he is and that puts fear into the average student at the high school," Fabrega said. "The proper protocol would have been to have the principal or vice principal — people that students can identify with — as part of the group. That's just common sense."

"Our main goal is to work closely with the school district and staff at Santa Monica High School to ensure the students continue to feel safe on the school grounds and to keep it as an educational facility," he added.

School board member Shane McLoud said he is more concerned about the situation at Samohi than chastising de la



New planning director steps in at pivotal time

RIGHT STUFF, from page 1

decades to come. The rewriting of laws, ordinances and zoning codes will affect not only development, but also transportation plans throughout the entire city.

The plan is expected to be adopted in the fall, after much public participation and comment.

McCarthy hopes to have a new planning director hired before then so he or she can help guide the effort and feel a certain amount of ownership for the new plan.

"It's a huge attraction for a candidate," she said.

Viable candidates will no doubt have to possess long-range vision and have the ability to translate the community's desires into a complex set of laws that are easy for the average person to navigate through — whether they are a homeowner simply trying to remodel or a large developer seeking approval for a condominium project.

The planning director position, which pays between \$112,900 and \$138,144, and oversees 108 employees, is responsible for many policies that affect people's day-to-day lives.

"The planning and zoning function is certainly high profile where the kinds of decisions made affect people's livelihoods and their homes," McCarthy said. "Impacts occur on a very personal level."

For years, City Hall's planning department has been under fire from many developers, merchants and residents for being overly bureaucratic and unresponsive. The department was subjected to an independent audit last year that verified complaints directed at City Hall for being more difficult to navigate than those in neighboring cities.

Through policies and ordinances passed by the City Council over the years, Santa Monica's zoning codes have become so complex that they invite confrontations between planning staff and customers who have different interpretations of the laws.

As a result, development has been controlled by process rather than by a clear set of laws that reflect the community's vision.

"We can no longer have a dogmatic planning department," said City Councilman Herb Katz, who is an architect and a frequent user of City Hall's planning department. "There are two schools of thought: Do you want to be cooperative or adversarial?"

"Right now, we are adversarial."

McCarthy said she'll be talking to interested groups — including most city governmental bodies that deal with development issues, as well as users of City Hall's Planning and Community Development Department — about what kind of qualifications and experience the new director should have.

That discussion will begin with a joint meeting between the City Council and the Planning Commission on Tuesday, April 26. The discussion will also touch upon what challenges and opportunities the new director will face, as well as what it takes to attract a good applicant.

"I'm interested in what's worked and what hasn't," McCarthy said, adding it will be crucial that a good working environment is created for the new director.

Katz hopes to see the position filled well before the general development plan is approved.

"We need someone sooner than later," he said. "We need a person who has flexibility, and they must obviously be bright and strong."

A thick skin should prove essential for the new director — oftentimes, Frick ended up being the scapegoat when criticism about the department's bureaucracy was discussed in the public realm, as well as in political circles.

"Her people were under attack," said local developer Craig Jones, of Frick's employees. "I think she did an excellent job of protecting her people."

"Whoever takes that job, they'll definitely be attacked," Jones added. "That planning director needs to be a really good manager for a large and important department."

The department, which includes building and safety, has suffered from employee turnover in recent years, compounding City Hall's customer service problems.

"We need someone who will keep them there and keep them motivated," Jones said. "Based on that turnover, there must be a lot of unhappy people there and it's not Suzanne Frick's fault."

Santa Monica's reputation as having an overly-bureaucratic and difficult city government must change, especially if the community wants to attract quality candidates for the job.

"That kind of thing doesn't help with an executive search," McCarthy said, adding the community must begin speaking positively about the city's future opportunities.

And those opportunities are plentiful — currently on the table are proposals to raze Santa Monica Place Mall and replace it with high-rise condominiums and the redevelopment of the Civic Center, located south of downtown.

Jones, who has developed mixed-use projects consisting primarily of retail and residential buildings in downtown Santa Monica, believes city officials have a tremendous opportunity to reshape the commercial core.

"Santa Monica is going through an identity crisis," he said. "It's this lily white affluent enclave ..."

"It's going to be a tough job for whoever takes (the planning director job) because of the general plan, but it's a really exciting opportunity."

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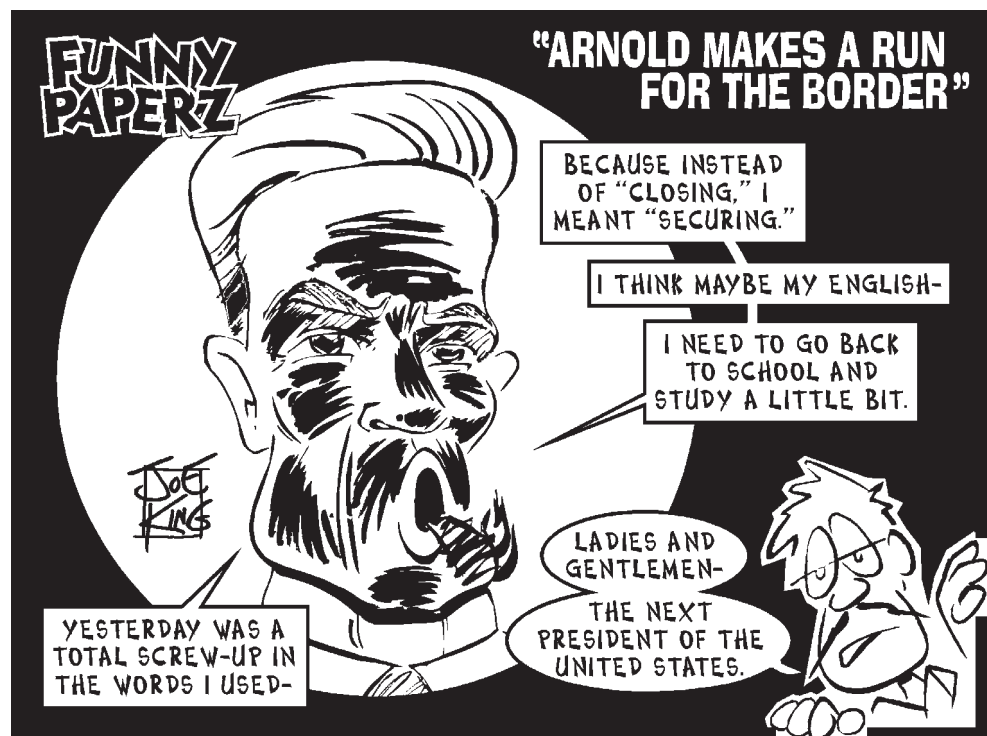
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OPINION



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

School administrators have heads in sand

Editor:

Yes, the good old Deasy spin machine is at it again. Superintendent of schools John Deasy addressed parents and students at Santa Monica on April 18, basically downplaying the incident by saying some students were defiant and had to be cooled down. Gee, then why the lockdown, police (including Culver City and Beverly Hills called) and students being handcuffed? Hmmm. Why did Deasy try to shun photographers from the scene and district employees weren't allowed to be interviewed?

Why do many students claim there is racial tension at the school like senior Nicole Barnes said at the meeting: "I've noticed that there has always been tension here on campus. It's something that needs to be addressed, I mean, I know there's politics here in Santa Monica, but it is a serious issue, and if you don't address it it's going to get worse." Oh, and the audience cheered her. Many parents called the meeting "sugar coating" and disingenuous. But according to the Deasy spin machine, all is well at Samohi and the nasty media is to blame. Deasy shared that parents should have a "kitchen table" conversation with their children. But he fails to realize that many working class parents at the school don't have the same luxuries in life that he does. A newspaper article quoted: "Deasy lectured on the need for community dialogue and inter-ethnic understanding as the parents and students at the historic auditorium waited eagerly for their turn to participate in the conversation."

What does he mean, and do we understand that? Let's ask Mr. Deasy what he plans to do to make the campus safer and truly look at the underlying causes for this incident.

Tyrone Murphy
Santa Monica

Samohi fight shocking for parent

Editor:

I am the parent of a Santa Monica High School student. I was physically there on Friday, April 15, 2005 during the fights. What I saw was unbelievable: Latinos were randomly punching black students and running to the next spot to start another fight. It was a jungle. The administrators were no help at all. As a matter of fact, I felt as if the administrators had no control whatsoever. They were steering clear of the drama while fights broke out everywhere. Not once did I see Dr. Straus. The arrival of the police somewhat calmed things down. Even the treatment of the black students from the policemen was disturbing to me. I overheard one white policeman holler at a group of black students as if they had a tail on back of them. I saw them grab a student as if he was a rag doll and threw him on the police car to handcuff him. Not one Latino was detained. If I had not seen this with my own eyes, I would not have believed it.

There is definitely a problem at Samohi that needs to be addressed and not swept under the carpet. What puzzled me the most was the appearance of helicopters, policemen and a news reporter at the scene, but never was it advertised publicly like Jefferson High School or any other inner city schools with the exact same problem.

I met with some of the other house staff members to find out if Samohi has a diversity program and was shocked to hear that they didn't. I offered to write one for them. We'll see if they really want to correct this problem by ignoring it or being proactive in improving and implementing positive changes.

Dianthia Simon
Santa Monica

See LETTERS, page 7

Cell outs: Phony call lets anyone be rude



MODERN TIMES

BY LLOYD GARVER

You know all those annoying people who talk into their cell phones as if you weren't standing right next to them? It turns out that many of them aren't really talking to anybody. The "New York Times" recently described research at Rutgers University as well as the Ethics and Public Policy Center that found that a great number of cell phone users are faking it.

A number of people make fake phone calls on their cell phones just for the benefit of those around them. Someone who's late for work may enter the office talking to "an important client" to cover her tardiness. Others pretend they get a call when they don't want to talk to someone who's standing right in front of them. Not surprisingly, some of those big deals you hear people negotiate on the phone are just done to impress those within earshot. Men will pretend to be on a call as they walk over to hit on a woman. Women will pretend to be on a call to avoid getting hit on by men.

Maybe this sounds like a creative use of technology to you, but I think it stinks. It was bad enough when I thought people were being rude, talking loudly about their personal lives to someone while looking right at me. Now I find out that they're being rude and not even talking to anybody.

Many of the cell phone tricksters say they pretend to be on a call just to be noticed. Until now, whenever I've seen crazy drivers on the phone swerve all over the road or come to an inexplicable stop, I've always felt they were just making a call that could probably wait until the drive was over. I'd pull up next to them and give them the traditional shake of the head and dirty look. Now, it turns out that my look may be exactly what the "caller" was hoping for. They're not putting our lives in danger because they're ordering a

pizza delivered to their house. They're doing it because they want us to notice their new blouse or tie.

We're all probably pretty understanding when someone we're sharing an elevator with is talking baby talk into his cell phone, ending with, "Daddy will be home soon." But now that we know that "Daddy" might not even have a kid, and might be talking to the weather forecast, we may not be so forgiving next time.

And that's a problem, because next time, "Daddy" might be real, and I don't want to tell some guy to get off the phone because he's faking it only to learn that he's really talking to his sick kid. So, these fakers have the potential to make the rest of us the bad guys.

The only way to deal with this is to fight faking with faking. When you're waiting to get off a plane and the guy next to you makes that, "We're just pulling into the gate, and I'll call you from the baggage" call, you can top it with, "This is the last time I fly commercial. I'll meet you at the helicopter."

When that obnoxious businessman shouts into his phone, declaring he's about to make a fortune because he was clever enough to buy Amalgamated Apple Sauce at 12, you can always talk into yours and say, "What's that? Amalgamated Apple Sauce is down to 3? Well, at least I sold in time."

And maybe we'll be tempted to resort to the ultimate defensive tactic. When we're surrounded by callers talking away on their electronic pals, we can always take out our cellular and say, "I understand, Mr. President. All personal, civilian cellular calls should be terminated ASAP. I will notify the people around me immediately, sir."

Maybe that will at least give us a few minutes of silence — until one of those phone fakers "needs to be noticed."

(Lloyd Garver has written for many television shows, ranging from "Sesame Street" to "Family Ties" to "Frasier." He writes the "Modern Times" column for CBSnews.com's opinion page, and can be reached at smdp@lloydgarver-moderntimes.com.)



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The Q Line

SAMOHI SCARE LEAVES PARENTS ON EDGE

This past week, Q-line asked:
In light of the recent unrest and violence at Santa Monica High School, the SMDP asked this question: "Do you think adequate security measures are in place in our schools? What changes, if any, would you suggest?"

Here are your responses:

① "The escalating violence in our schools nationwide is just a symptom and reflection of the moral breakdown in society in general. There are no absolutes of right and wrong anymore. Whatever feels right to you, as an individual, go ahead and do it. Mixed messages of all kinds are being sent to our children and young people, creating confusion and rebellion which are triggers for unrest and outbreaks of negative reactions of all kinds. I guess the only solution, in the schools themselves, is to turn them into camps, since society at large doesn't seem to want to change."

② "Police departments and security forces function as a deterrent to crime and function constitutionally, by the most part, after a crime has been committed. A person intent on committing a crime will find a way to circumvent security as a burglar circumvents a locked door and crawls through a window. Many years ago, America was populated by a white race of people who were either Catholic or Protestant. Today, America is a melting pot of multiple races and religions who often are at odds with one another. Comedian Redd Foxx mentioned, while appearing on a Las Vegas stage, we should understand that there is only one race of people, the human race and we should endeavor to get along. Redd had a dream."

③ "Yes, as a parent of a child that has gone to Santa Monica schools since Grant Elementary, and now attends Santa Monica High School, I think it would be a good idea to let those so-called miscreants watch 'Scared Straight' and that'll fix their wagons. So that's my advice, because I'm a very concerned parent, and I've got a drop-dead gorgeous son that goes to Samohi, and I'm proud of Santa Monica High School, because I think it's the best school if you have to go to public school. I went to a private school, but I think public school is better. So you can find out what's happening with different people of different races and cultures."

④ "I don't think schools should have a lockdown situation, ever. I think that it's actually important when people's safety are being threatened and I think there's a lack of security at some of the schools because of lack of funds. We don't have the money, we've had cutbacks. I also think that last Friday's situation at Santa Monica High School probably would have been avoided if the administration were in better touch with the community, with the student community."

⑤ "The problem is not security in the schools, the problem is bad kids. Most of the kids in those schools are good, they're not troublemakers, they don't start fights or bring weapons. Keep the schools for those kids. The bad kids, which is the gang members and the

garbage trash people, the troublemakers that start fights and pick on everybody else — take them out of the normal school and put them in reform school like they used to have in the old days. Then you could put the armed police in those schools just to keep an eye on those people — the criminals, the gang members — they don't belong in normal schools with normal decent children."

⑥ "Yeah, high school security: All teachers and staff need to have pistol training and carry open firearms on campus at all times. And any wusses that refuse should be fired."

⑦ "Everyone involved in the fighting at Samohi should be expelled from school as soon as possible. Also, I believe there was a change in the expulsion policy a few years ago and the school board adopted a much more lenient policy. I think the school board should question that policy's effectiveness, and I think the old policy should be returned no matter who likes it or not."

⑧ "I have a child who attends Santa Monica High School. I was on campus during the fight on Friday, April 15, and there was a big cover-up. I saw, with my own eyes — and if I had not seen this with my own eyes, I would not have believed it — Santa Monica has a big problem with their administrators, they have no control whatsoever over those students. I saw with my own eyes Latinos randomly punching and beating up black people, and they want to make it as if it's an African-American problem, which it isn't. They were not the threats, they were being threatened. Like I said, if I didn't see it with my own eyes, I would not have believed it. There was nothing that the administrators were doing, the security officers weren't doing anything. It was when the Santa Monica Police Department arrived when things sort of got (under control)."

⑨ "I bet most of the kids at Samohi that were involved in the big brawl don't even live in Santa Monica. The school board constantly whines for more tax money out of property owners, yet we could save millions and not have wars on campus if we allowed only kids from Santa Monica to go to our local schools."

⑩ "Yes, I think to increase safety at the schools, No. 1, do not allow the two gangs to operate at Santa Monica High School. Do not allow members of gangs to participate in any school activities including classroom teaching, learning. And No. 2, make the no tolerance rule a real rule and enforce it. And then also I think the school superintendent, Dr. Deasy, and principal, Dr. Straus, should be investigated for making false and misleading statements to parents at the meeting."

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

LETTERS, from page 6

Samohi unrest needs to be addressed

Editor:

As a mother whose child graduated from Santa Monica High School, and a 1978 alumni, I was saddened by the events of last week. Fighting of this type is unfortunately common. Obviously, race is an issue. Blacks and Hispanics have had conflicts all over Southern California, i.e., Jefferson High School in Los Angeles and Kennedy High School in the San Fernando Valley, most recently. These conflicts have developed over years of lack of understanding each other, stereotypes and plain ignorance. Parents also perpetuate continued hatred by their actions at home. As to the Samohi mother Ms. Friedrich, (SMDP, April 20, page 1), I say this: Your view is both naive and racist. Who are you to say "We have bought them a first class education?" Samohi is a public high school with taxpayers among all residents: whites, blacks and Hispanics. Who is "we?" Who is "them?"

This attitude will only harbor more resentment among all races. The truth is that race relations must be constantly addressed at every school of every level. Burying your head in the sand and believing that "can't we all just get along?" will cut it, will settle nothing. These students need intervention, discipline and security no matter the cost to all of this community. The white flight at Samohi will continue, with only the monetarily challenged students remaining.

When I attended Samohi, the quad was a melting pot of all races. The surfers in one corner, the BSU dances in the other, the Hispanics over there, Asians on the grass, football players over on the wall, etc. We mixed well and enjoyed our differences. When my daughter attended there, the white students didn't hang out in the quad anymore. The quad was limited to blacks and Hispanics. I was surprised by this and her account that there was so much separation and that they seemed to be going backwards. Let's not wait for another incident with more dire results before these issues are truly addressed.

Anita Tucker
Santa Monica

School brawl deserves appropriate response

Editor:

I am encouraged that school officials met with the large contingency of parents to discuss what happened regarding the Samohi brawl. I agree entirely with school superintendent John Deasy that action should be taken "when students don't comply." However, after reading your article (SMDP, April 20, page 1), I did not get a sense that an action plan was implemented in order to "take action" against the perpetrators involved.

I am deeply discouraged and in total disagreement with some of the comments made by school board member and youth center director, Oscar de la Torre. Mr. de la Torre's suggestion, as a deterrent, to "get these groups to agree to fight one-on-one instead of ganging up on each other" is completely absurd, out of line and only condones the students fighting. Yes, the underlying problems to these brawls must be addressed and there must be a dialogue. However, counseling and promoting youth to fight is not a solution to be remotely considered. Mr. de la Torre further stated, "the kids have so many problems" and "their parents are overwhelmed." That sounds like an excuse to me.

The school board's and principal's action plan needs to directly involve the police to investigate and identify the guilty parties. If anyone involved is on a visiting permit as a guest to our school district, their permit should be immediately revoked. Anyone involved within the district should be suspended, with an expulsion warning for further incidents. As for the parents, who should be held accountable for their minor children's actions, they should be required to absorb some of the added cost to finance police and security directly related to these problems.

After the guilty students are given their consequence for this brawl, the message of zero tolerance for fighting as a solution will be conveyed to all students and parents. Not until that message is made public to all, can the open dialogue begin so that the root of the problem can be addressed and nonviolent solutions considered.

Steve Gallardo
Santa Monica

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Close-up of Darwin albino finch on the Galapagos Island of Genoyesa.



Darwin albino finch searching for food on the Galapagos Islands.

SANTA MONICA OPHTHALMOLOGIST MICHAEL REYNARD, M.D.

SIGHTS THE ELUSIVE DARWIN ALBINO FINCH

Santa Monica ophthalmologist Michael Reynard, M.D. hadn't the slightest clue that he would make a significant ornithological discovery in his recent visit to the Galapagos Islands. While visiting the Galapagos island of Genoyesa on March 9, 2005, Dr. Michael Reynard and a group of visitors sighted the rare Darwin Albino Finch. This subtype of finch had not been sighted on the Galapagos Islands for over forty years and is not one of the thirteen species known to currently exist on the Galapagos Islands. Dr. Michael Reynard of Santa Monica, guide Enrique Silva of Galapagos, Ecuador, Mike Jenkins of Leicestershire, England, and Fred Girshick of Linden, New Jersey, became the first visitors to the Galapagos Islands to take still photographs of the elusive Darwin Albino Finch. Michael Reynard, M.D. is an ophthalmologist in Santa Monica specializing in laser, cataract, and eyelid surgery

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LOCAL



Carolyn Sackariason/Daily Press

Jose Luis Flores begins to clean up Britannia Pub on Friday after a broken fire hydrant gushed water into the bar area.

Rush hour comes early on Santa Monica Blvd.

SPOUTING OFF, from page 1

Boulevard and onto the Promenade long after crews managed to cap the hydrant.

The incident, which occurred at about 10:30 a.m., attracted about 100 onlookers from both sides of Santa Monica Boulevard. They applauded the workers when the water was finally turned off. The incident caused extensive damage to Britannia Pub, which is located just feet from the hydrant. Water slammed the pub's patio, trashed its canopy and spewed over the building, causing damage to the roof and inside the bar. The floor will most likely have to be replaced.

Sonia Cain, co-owner of the pub, said she was working in her office above the

bar when one of her employees came in and said there was a water problem. She assumed the problem stemmed from behind the building, so when she went into the alley and walked to front of the pub, Cain was shocked at what she saw.

"I just couldn't believe the waterfall in front of the building," Cain said, adding she immediately grabbed her digital camera, not realizing the damage the geyser was calling. "The water was thundering up the windows. It was quite an event."

The pub, which serves lunch daily, didn't open until 2 p.m. on Friday. But everything appears to be back to normal.

"We will be open for karaoke on Saturday night," Cain said.

De la Torre unapologetic for trying to sway youth

SAMOH, from page 4

Torre's efforts.

"I have not spoken with Oscar nor the administration about his visit, and therefore don't know about steps he took," McLoud said. "I am more concerned about the escalation of fights and tension between our students and how we, as a community, will be able to put our differences behind us and move forward toward common goals."

McLoud indicated that de la Torre is well respected by the youth at Samohi, and that he values and welcomes his leadership as the executive director of the Pico Youth & Family Center, and as a voice on the school board. The Pico Youth & Family Center is a City Hall-funded nonprofit organization to help at-risk youth.

"He understands many of the struggles that some of the youth are having in our city, and has the experience and respect of the youth to contribute solutions in the right setting," McLoud said.

Franky Vazquez, a Samohi student, spoke on de la Torre's behalf at the school board meeting.

"We see (de la Torre) as a Latino businessman who knows our struggles," Vazquez said. "Some see him as a troublemaker, but we see him as a friend to all people."

Fabian E. Padilla, whose brother is a SMPD lieutenant and has a son attending Samohi, said de la Torre could have handled his efforts in a more effective way.

"I think he was taking it a little too far coming to campus with two guys who look like gang bangers without prior notification to the administration, security, or police, bringing the message, 'Hey, it's OK to be like me, I'm a two-striker and still wear baggy clothes,'" Padilla said. "Let's see these guys show up to campus in business attire with their sleeves over their tattoos. It also would have been better if he brought some reformed black gang members, too. I'm just worried some day a student who believes in Oscar is going to do something stupid, 'for the cause.'"

De la Torre was unapologetic about what occurred on Wednesday and thought police needed to make efforts to not jump to conclusions. Nonetheless, he said he hoped his relations with SMPD could move forward.

"In hindsight, everyone is an expert," de la Torre said, referring to Wednesday's incident. "I forgive Chief Butts and I want to move forward with solutions and not focus on vendettas or character assassinations."

"I think we should model unity and not be divisive in this time."

STATE



You've got sued: AOL monitor on the hot seat

BY ALEX VEIGA

Associated Press Writer

LOS ANGELES — America Online markets itself as a safe place for children, with parent-friendly features and a force of employees who monitor kids' chat rooms and watch out for adults prowling for youngsters.

But is AOL doing enough to monitor the monitors?

That question is central to a lawsuit filed by a California teenager who claims a chat-room monitor tried to seduce her online.

The employee allegedly used his position to proposition the girl over two years, during which they exchanged graphic images, e-mails and phone calls — exactly the kind of scenario the man was hired to prevent.

AOL fired the man, listed in the lawsuit as a resident of Oklahoma, and referred the case to the FBI and other law enforcement agencies, none of which pursued criminal charges.

The girl's lawsuit, filed April 1, is the first such claim made against an employee at AOL or any other major Internet service provider, according to online child safety organizations and law enforcement agencies. It alleges negligence and false advertising and seeks at least \$25,000 from the chat room monitor, AOL and its parent, Time Warner Inc.

AOL says it closely screens its chat-room monitors and acted quickly in this case.

Still, the company is being forced to defend itself over a service it pioneered in the mid-1990s and which remains a selling point to keep its millions of subscribers from jumping to other Internet service providers.

"This case isn't so much are they properly monitoring chat rooms for kids; this is more a question of what are they doing to monitor the qualities and qualifications of the people they're hiring," said Parry Aftab, an Internet lawyer in New Jersey who runs online safety workshops for parents and children.

Claims of online abuse by an employee are rare, said Aftab, who has heard of no more than a dozen against chat-room monitors or moderators.

Chat-room monitors are cyberspace's lifeguards. They typically watch over the messages that participants post, and warn users when they cross the line with offensive or otherwise prohibited remarks. They can delete offending remarks, kick violators out of the chat room, even ban them from returning.

AOL is a rarity — a major service provider that offers its own chat service, as well as one of the few online companies that have paid, full-time employees monitoring some chat rooms. The company markets its KOL, or Kids Online, chat area as a safer online experience.

It was inside one kids-only chat room where the AOL employee, then 23, first contacted the then-15-year-old girl, who was living in Kern County, according to the lawsuit. She is now 19 and living in Los Angeles.

They grew close, according to the lawsuit, the girl gradually confiding in him about her parents' divorce and her troubles making friends. She and the chat monitor were preparing to meet on her 17th birthday and have sex, the lawsuit said, when one of the his co-workers became suspicious and blew the whistle.

AOL spokesman Nicholas Graham said monitors undergo rigorous screening, including drug testing and background checks, and receive specialized training for the area and age group they will be monitoring.

"That monitoring is itself actively monitored and scrutinized by internal compliance and investigation teams with close, long-standing working relationships with both law enforcement and children's safety advocacy groups," Graham said. "The bottom line is, AOL's self-policing and self-monitoring efforts worked."

Graham would not say how many full-time chat-room monitors AOL has, or whether the company has tightened its procedures because of the case.

But if AOL's oversight was effective, the monitor would have been caught well before he arranged to meet the girl, said her attorney, Olivier Taillieu.

"You can't let something like this go on for two years or a year and a half," Taillieu said. "You can't have the lifeguard jump in the pool and drown one of the kids."

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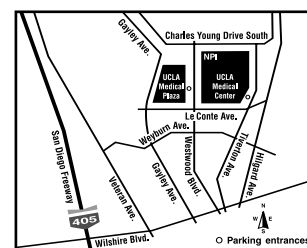
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NATIONAL

Park visitors go with flow after volcano flick

BY BOB MOEN
Associated Press Writer

CHEYENNE, Wyo. — A cable television docudrama depicting a cataclysmic eruption of the Yellowstone National Park "supervolcano" has drawn some free advice from the public but nary a concern from folks making plans to visit the popular park, officials say.

"There's been no impact on reservations whatsoever," said Scott Cote, executive director of operations for park concessionaire Xanterra Parks & Resorts. "It was interesting, and it was entertainment, but evidently people aren't taking it all that seriously."

Cote said this week that reservations for park lodging are on par with the last two or three years.

"We've had just a few inquiries here at the park, but not many," said Yellowstone spokeswoman Cheryl Matthews.

The docudrama, "Supervolcano," was shown over the past two weekends on the Discovery Channel. The made-for-television movie is based on the Yellowstone volcano erupting again.

The heart of Yellowstone is an enormous volcano that last erupted 640,000 years ago. Other massive eruptions occurred 1.3 million and 2.1 million years ago. The huge caldera, measuring 50 miles by 30 miles, makes it the largest active volcano in the world, geologists say.

"It's the largest magma chamber that we know about," according to Jake Lowenstern, a U.S. Geological Survey research geologist in charge of the Yellowstone Volcano Observatory, a cooperative arrangement of the USGS, the University of Utah and the National Park Service.

The movie has prompted letters from people offering suggestions on how to lower the pressure on the magma chamber, said Lowenstern, who is based near San Francisco.

The free ideas include drilling a hole into the magma chamber — something that wouldn't do any good since the hole would be quickly plugged up by hot, mushy rock, Lowenstern said.

"Very interesting ideas, but not necessarily feasible," he said.

Anticipating questions from tourists this summer because of the movie, Yellowstone interpretive rangers have been receiving training from Henry Heasler, the park's supervisory geologist.

"I'm doing what I can to make sure those Park Service rangers have the correct information to pass on about the supervolcano," Heasler said.

Heasler said the more people learn about Yellowstone the better.

And one thing they will learn is that a supereruption as depicted in the movie isn't likely anytime soon because there is no evidence one is about to occur, he said.



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NATIONAL



Mysterious sea squirt makes presence known

BY RICHARD C. LEWIS

Associated Press Writer

WOODS HOLE, Mass. — A mysterious new breed of sea squirt found recently in waters in New England and the Pacific Northwest has spread unabated along those coasts and in a vital offshore fishing ground, scientists said on Friday at the first international conference on the issue.

The species, called *Didemnum*, has been found from Maine to New York and from northern California to Washington, according to scientists attending the conference at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution. The colonies are multiplying, and scientists, unsure how to stem their spread, are increasingly worried they could overwhelm valuable shellfish beds.

"It's ecological roulette. That's what we're trying to prevent here," said James Carlton, the conference's keynote speaker and a marine ecologist at Williams College in Williamstown, Mass.

Sea squirts are tunicates, invertebrates with a firm, rubbery outer covering called a "tunic." They come in all colors and attach themselves to hard surfaces, such as rocky sea bottoms or moorings in a harbor. Scientists have identified about 3,000 species of sea squirts worldwide. Most are not considered threats because they remain confined to a certain area and don't proliferate.

But certain species appear to be mobile, and can be transported to new areas, where they colonize and multiply. Scientists don't know how to stop those species from spreading, and as yet have been unable to figure out why certain species are invading other areas.

One of those species is *Didemnum*, which was first found in Cape Cod in 1993. Scientists began tracking it in 1998, and *Didemnum* is now found in half the bays and harbors on Cape Cod, Carman said.

Didemnum generally covers all in its path, "sort of like astroturfing the sea floor," according to Carlton. The mats choke off bottom-dwellers such as shellfish and may cover grounds needed by fish to lay eggs, scientists say. The spread has alarmed the shellfish industry, which has just recently contacted the scientific community for help.

Sea squirts were once believed to dwell only in coastal waters. But in 2002, scientists found colonies of *Didemnum* in George's Bank, a fertile offshore fishing ground off the coast of Massachusetts.

Scientists are puzzled how *Didemnum* arrived in U.S. waters. Carman said they may have come from Japan, which, along with the Netherlands and New Zealand, have colonies. They also don't know what conditions allow it to thrive, though some believe waters rich with nitrogen from runoff and other pollutants may be a factor.



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BRIEFS, from page 3

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Olympic artist donates painting to St. Joseph’s

By Daily Press staff

Internationally renowned fine artist, Susan Manders, has donated her original U.S. Olympic Team – Athens 2004 painting “All Eyes on Me,” oil on canvas, to St. Joseph Center in Venice, in order to benefit the more than 7,000 homeless and low-income men, women and children the center aids toward self-sufficiency each year.



SUSAN MANDERS

“I felt an obligation to capture in my painting the most important element of the Olympic message,” said Manders, when chosen to be the official United States Olympic Artist. “That is the lifelong responsibility these winning athletes assume to

live like champions. Now, I hope my painting can inspire others to live like champions.”



Photo courtesy

Manders’ painting ‘All Eyes on Me’ has been donated to St. Joseph Center in Venice.

With her works archived in the National Museum of Women in the Arts in Washington, D.C., Manders’ pieces bring \$40,000 and up. Funds collected from the sale of the Olympics painting will help support St. Joseph Center’s 10 programs for homeless and low-income individuals and families on the Westside, providing emergency services, food distributions, child care, mentoring, job training and senior services.

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5.1 Earthquake Quake jolts Kern County

BY FABIAN E. PADILLA
PRESIDENT SAFE GAS SERVICES

The recent 5.1 quake that rocked Kern County last week and was felt in parts of Los Angeles is just a reminder of how important it is to prepare for a major earthquake. DO NOT get caught with your guards down. With all the current earthquake activity, locally and around the globe, experts predict that we are due for a major earthquake. Surprised? We live in Southern California where there are over 200 active faults with the true potential to create a natural disaster in your area. Are you ready for the big one? Where will you be when it strikes? Are your loved ones ready?

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NATIONAL

Woman who found finger in chili is busted

BY CHRISTINA ALMEIDA
Associated Press Writer

LAS VEGAS — The woman who claimed she found a finger in her bowl of Wendy's chili last month has been arrested, the latest twist in a bizarre case about how the 1 1/2-inch finger tip ended up in a bowl of fast food.

Anna Ayala was taken into custody late Thursday at her Las Vegas home. She was arrested on a warrant alleging grand larceny and attempted grand larceny, Las Vegas Police Sgt. Chris Jones said.

Authorities said would not provide further details until a news conference Friday afternoon in San Jose, Calif. — the city where Ayala claimed she bit down on the finger in a mouthful of her steamy stew.

Ayala's 18-year-old son, Guadalupe Reyes, said he had gone to the store

around 9 p.m. when he got a phone call from a friend who was back at the Las Vegas home.

"We rushed back and she was already gone," Reyes said.

Reyes said he had no other details and was waiting to hear from his mother. A handwritten sign on the door of her home Friday morning instructed reporters not to knock, and telephone messages were not returned.

Ayala, 39, was held overnight at the Clark County jail in Las Vegas, where records showed she was being held without bail.

In Ohio, Wendy's officials praised the police's actions. "We're thrilled that an arrest has been made," Tom Mueller, president and chief operating officer of Wendy's North America, said in a statement.

Ayala's claim that she found the fingertip, complete with a well-manicured nail, on March 22 initially drew sympathy. But when police and health officials failed to find any missing digits among the workers involved in the restaurant's supply chain, suspicion fell on Ayala, and her story has become a late-night punch line.

Ayala hired a lawyer and filed a claim against the Wendy's franchise owner, Fresno-based JEM Management. But after police searched her home in Las Vegas and continued to question her family, she dropped the lawsuit threat, saying the whole situation was just too stressful.

Ayala has a litigious history. She has filed claims against several corporations, including a former employer and General Motors, though it is unclear from court records whether she received any money.

She said she got \$30,000 from El Pollo Loco after her 13-year-old daughter got sick at one of the chain's Las Vegas-area restaurants. El Pollo Loco spokeswoman Julie Weeks said last week that the company reviewed Ayala's February 2004 claim and paid her nothing.

Earlier Thursday, Wendy's International Inc. announced it had ended its internal investigation, saying it could find no credible link between the finger and the restaurant chain.

Sales have dropped at franchises in Northern California, forcing layoffs and reduced hours, the company said. Wendy's also has hired private investigators, set up a hot line for tips and offered a \$100,000 reward for anyone who provides information leading to the finger's original owner.



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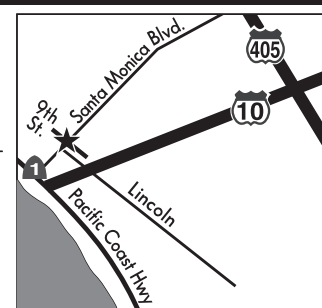
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NATIONAL



College's minority students moved to hotel

BY CARLA K. JOHNSON
Associated Press Writer

DEERFIELD, Ill. — Authorities at a Christian university near Chicago moved dozens of black and Hispanic students to a hotel for their own safety and police stepped up patrols on campus Friday after three people received threatening, racist letters.

One parent said the letters were sent to white women dating black athletes at 3,300-student Trinity International University, but school officials denied there was any connection to interracial dating.

Police and school officials would not discuss the threats in detail but said two of the letters were sent on notebook paper through the campus' internal mail system, and professors were being asked to try to identify the handwriting.

"This is a diverse campus," university spokesman Gary Cantwell said. "We condemn any kind of intolerance. We assume this is an isolated incident and not representative of the college."

The letters were addressed to specific students and arrived over the past two weeks, Cantwell said. The most recent let-

ter, shown to campus administrators and police on Thursday, threatened violence with a weapon, Bannockburn Police Chief Kevin Tracz said.

Because the threats came within days of the anniversaries of the Columbine High School shootings, the Oklahoma City bombing and Adolf Hitler's birthday, the school suggested that all minority students be given the option of staying in a hotel if they did not feel safe in the dorms, the police chief said.

"They just didn't want to take any chances, and I agree with them," he said.

Dean of Students William Washington said he and 43 students spent the night at a hotel, while others who are from the area stayed with family or friends.

Cantwell said it was not clear how long the students would be put up at a hotel.

Classes went on as scheduled, with police cars patrolling the streets and campus security guards keeping reporters from talking to students.

About 20 students stood outside in the rain during their lunch break, holding hands and praying.

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NATIONAL

BLM says it can't stop wild horse slaughter

BY SCOTT SONNER

Associated Press Writer

RENO, Nev. — Animal activists criticized the Bureau of Land Management on Friday for allowing six previously protected wild horses to be slaughtered for meat, and said it proves federal safeguards repealed last year need to be reinstated.

The BLM is investigating how the mustangs ended up at an Illinois slaughterhouse, but the government has “no legal recourse” to prevent such slaughters since a 34-year-old law was changed in December, agency spokeswoman Celia Boddington said. The BLM sold the six horses that had been rounded up in Wyoming to a private owner in Oklahoma earlier this month, the agency said.

The sale was authorized under the change in law in December. The amendment by Sen. Conrad Burns, R-Mont., directs the agency offer for sale any excess mustangs that are older than age 10 or were unsuccessfully offered to the public three times under a separate, long-running adoption program.

“Although it was six wild horses whose blood was

spilled, it could easily have been 60 or 200,” said Trina Bellak, president of the American Horse Defense Fund.

“Virtually any and all of the wild horses sold recently under the new Burns sale authority are in jeopardy. The change was a disaster waiting to happen and now it has,” she said.

The BLM might step up its screening process for potential horse buyers, Boddington said.

“We regret this incident occurred, but these horses were private property,” she said.

“We certainly do our best to vet those potential buyers to make sure they have a real interest and intend to provide long-term care to these animals,” she said.

BLM won't release any information about the person who purchased the mustangs, but Nancy Perry, vice president of the Humane Society of the United States, said the purchaser was an Oklahoma man who claimed to be a minister who wanted the mustangs for a youth camp.

Officials at the processing plant defended their disposal of the mustangs in a “humane manner” while recycling them into food for foreign markets.

“We don't feel the government should be deciding for livestock owners how they dispose of their animals. This

just gives the BLM the same options that a farmer or rancher has,” said Jim Tucker, general manager of Cavel International Inc. in Dekalb, Ill.

Tucker said Cavel “euthanizes the animals in a humane manner” — with a gun-like “penetrating captive bolt” shot into the forehead. It's the same method used at cattle slaughterhouses and approved by the American Veterinary Medical Association, he said.

“We always felt here that we are recycling a resource and producing food,” he said.

Cavel typically pays 47 cents a pound for useable horse meat, or about \$300 for a 1,000- pound horse that produces about 600 pounds of horse meat, Tucker said.

“It doesn't come anywhere near what a useable horse commands at auction,” he said.

Burns authored an amendment repealing the slaughter ban at the urging of ranchers concerned about overpopulation of the horses and their effect on the range.

About 37,000 wild horses and burros roam the Western range, about 9,000 more than the BLM has said the natural forage can sustain. The animals are captured during periodic government roundups.

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NATIONAL



Moussaoui pleads guilty to working with 9/11 hijackers

BY PETE YOST
Associated Press Writer

ALEXANDRIA, Va. — Zacarias Moussaoui pleaded guilty Friday to conspiring with the Sept. 11 hijackers to kill Americans and declared he was personally chosen by Osama bin Laden to fly a plane into the White House during a later attack.

Moussaoui admitted guilt in front of a packed courtroom only a few miles from where one of the four hijacked planes crashed into the Pentagon in 2001. He pleaded to six conspiracy counts, four of which could bring the death penalty.

He said he would contest such a sentence, which prosecutors say they intend to pursue. “I will fight every inch against the death penalty,” he said.

Asked by U.S. District Judge Leonie Brinkema if prosecutors had promised him the possibility of a lighter sentence for his admission, Moussaoui said no. Then he added, “I don’t expect any leniency from the Americans.”

Brinkema accepted his pleas, making the French citizen the lone person convicted in a U.S. court in connection with the attacks that killed nearly 3,000 people.

While a sentencing phase still must come, the hearing brought a dramatic conclusion to a bizarre three-year legal battle during which the mercurial Moussaoui insulted Brinkema, tried to fire his lawyers and once asked to plead guilty only to change his mind a week later.

Wearing a green prison jump suit and a full beard, Moussaoui entered the hushed courtroom and politely answered questions from Brinkema, a departure from some previous appearances during which he sometimes ranted at her.

“How do you plead?” she asked him for each of the six felony counts. Each time, he answered, “Guilty.”

Brinkema asked Moussaoui to review a lengthy statement of facts in which prosecutors laid out their case against him. He carefully reviewed it as court spectators watched intently. Brinkema asked if he understood it.

“Yes I have read more than 10 times this statement. I pondered each paragraph and find it factual,” he said.

Moussaoui was arrested in August 2001 after drawing attention at a Minnesota flight school because he had said he wanted to learn to fly a Boeing 747 although he had no pilot’s license. He was in custody on Sept. 11.

Moussaoui said he lied to federal agents after his arrest in order to allow the Sept. 11 plot to proceed.

In the statement of facts, Moussaoui said bin Laden had personally selected him to take part in an attack on the White House with a commercial airliner.

Bin Laden told Moussaoui, “Sahrawi, remember your dream,” according to the statement. Abu Khaled al Sahrawi was one of the names Moussaoui used.

Moussaoui said he lied to federal agents after his arrest in order to allow the Sept. 11 plot to proceed. He denied being part of al-Qaida and “falsely denied that he was taking pilot training to kill Americans,” according to the statement he signed.

Brinkema asked defense lawyer Alan Yamamoto, the only attorney Moussaoui has been willing to talk to in recent weeks, if he was satisfied his client understood what he was doing by pleading guilty.

“When I have spoken to him, we have disagreed,” Yamamoto said. “He is facing the possibility of death or life in prison. He has told me that he understands that.”

Brinkema said she personally had discussed the pleas at length with Moussaoui earlier.

“He has a better understanding of the legal system than some lawyers I have seen in court,” the judge said.

“The court is accepting today the defendant’s six pleas of guilty to the six counts of the indictment,” Brinkema said.

“You are found guilty at this time,” she told Moussaoui.

Prosecutor Robert Spencer told the court he believed Moussaoui should be ordered to pay restitution to the victims of Sept. 11.

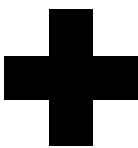
When the judge noted that part of the penalties could include a \$250,000 fine, Moussaoui replied, “I wonder where I will get the money.”

Before he formally entered the plea, he was asked if he understood the statement could be used against him to prove he was guilty. “Absolutely I do understand that,” he said.

A few seconds later, he added, “Where do I get the pen?”

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Eight killed by car bomb while praying

BY ALEXANDRA ZAVIS

Associated Press Writer

BAGHDAD, Iraq — A car bomb ripped through a crowded mosque during Friday prayers, killing eight people and wounding 26 in the latest attack targeting Iraq's Shiite majority. Frantic worshippers searched through rubble for loved ones, and women wailed and beat their chests in grief.

The U.S. military sent investigators to the grassy field north of Baghdad where a helicopter carrying 11 civilians was shot down Thursday. A video posted on a militant Web site suggested insurgents gunned down the lone survivor of the crash, and the Bulgarian company that owns the helicopter confirmed Friday the man seen in the footage was indeed one of the aircraft's pilots.

The violence was part of a surge of attacks that have caused heavy casualties in recent weeks, ending a relative lull since Iraqis voted in historic Jan. 30 elections. Iraqi leaders are struggling to form a Cabinet that will include members of the Sunni minority, believed to be the driving force in the insurgency.

Al-Jazeera aired part of a video Friday in which it said a militant group was threatening to kill three kidnapped Romanian journalists and their Iraqi-American translator unless Romanian troops leave Iraq within four days.

One U.S. soldier was killed Friday by a roadside bomb north of Tal Afar, 95 miles east of the Syrian border, the military said. On Thursday, a U.S. Marine died in a non-hostile incident at Camp Delta, near Karmah, 50 miles west of Baghdad, the military said. More than 1,500 members of the U.S. military have died since the beginning of the Iraq war two years ago.

The car bomb exploded at Al-Subeih mosque, in the capital's Shiite-dominated New Baghdad neighborhood, said police Col. Ahmed Aboud. Witnesses said the vehicle used in the attack had been parked outside the building since the morning.

A 10-year-old child was among the eight people killed, and the 26 wounded included two 9-year-olds, hospital officials said. Body parts were strewn at the scene among piles of bricks, shattered glass and pools of blood. One man clutched a child's foot, shaking and weeping.

"This is a cowardly and savage act that aims to create conflict among Iraqis," said Abdelallah Faraj, a grocer who survived the attack.

Shiite mosques and funerals have become a frequent target of Sunni-led insurgents. In February, suicide bombers attacked a number of them during the Shiite commemoration of Ashoura, killing nearly 100 people. In recent weeks, police have pulled dozens of bodies from the Tigris River in a region south of Baghdad that has seen retaliatory kidnappings and killings by Shiite and Sunni groups.

North of the capital, Col. Paul Bricker led a team of investigators who surveyed the site where the helicopter crashed Thursday, the military said.

The chartered flight between Baghdad and Tikrit was believed to be the first civilian aircraft shot down in Iraq since the U.S.-led invasion in March 2003. A spokesman for U.S. forces in Iraq said an American medevac team arrived at the site within a half hour of Thursday's crash and found no survivors.

The dead included six American bodyguards for U.S. diplomats, three Bulgarian crew and two security guards from Fiji, officials said.

Their bodies were taken to Balad Air Base, and an aircraft recovery team from the 3rd Infantry Division was moving the wreckage of the helicopter to Baghdad International Airport for further inspection, the military said.

Two militant groups claimed responsibility for shooting down the Russian-made Mi-8 helicopter and released video to support their claims.

A group calling itself the Islamic Army in Iraq posted footage on the Internet purporting to show militants capturing and shooting the lone survivor, found lying in the grass near burning wreckage and charred bodies.

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INTERNATIONAL



Pope Benedict XVI gears up for new influx of pilgrims

BY NICOLE WINFIELD
Associated Press Writer

VATICAN CITY — Pope Benedict XVI held his first working meeting with the College of Cardinals on Friday as Vatican and Rome authorities began gearing up for another influx of dignitaries and faithful for a Sunday inauguration expected to draw half a million people.

Italian civil protection officials estimate about 100,000 people from Benedict's native Germany will travel to Rome for the ceremony, and Rome was bringing in volunteers from Italy's German-speaking north to help. Monday is a national holiday, and Italians are expected to converge on the Eternal City to take advantage of the long weekend.

A day after confirming the entire Vatican hierarchy in a seamless transition of church leadership, Benedict met the College of Cardinals for the first working session, taking time to greet each cardinal and exchange a few words.

Cardinal Angelo Sodano, the Vatican's No. 2 official, made introductory remarks inside the marbled and frescoed Sala Clementina of the Apostolic Palace as Benedict, dressed in white and sitting on a gilded throne, listened and smiled. The other cardinals sat around him, applauding as Sodano and Benedict embraced.

Sitting in the hall where Pope John Paul II lay in state following his April 2 death, Benedict thanked the cardinals for their support and faith in electing him the 265th leader of the Roman Catholic Church.

"It's an act of faith that constitutes encouragement as I undertake this new mission with more serenity, because I am able to count on your generous collaboration in addition to the indispensable help of God," he said.

After his remarks, cardinals lined up to greet him and kneel before him as he sat in his chair. Benedict stood to embrace elderly cardinals who have trouble walking, including American Cardinal William Baum, as well as Polish Cardinal Andrzej Maria Deskur, who is confined to a wheelchair.

In his three days as pope, Benedict has been trying to ensure continuity in church leadership while brightening his austere image.

On Thursday, he greeted the faithful on the streets, waving and smiling at crowds gathered along the short stretch between the Vatican gates and his old apartment, where he spent some time in the afternoon.

"Viva il papa!" some shouted.

Benedict's schedule also shows hints of the openness and symbolic gestures that were at the heart of John Paul's reign. He is to meet Saturday with journalists, something he regularly did as a cardinal.

An outdoor Mass to formally take the papal throne is scheduled for Sunday. Choosing an open-air installation over an indoor ceremony in St. Peter's Basilica shows Benedict favors the populist touch of recent popes, who have made the same choice.

Italian civil protection chief Guido Bertolaso told reporters Thursday that the pope likely would mingle with the faithful gathered in St. Peter's Square. On his installation day, John Paul walked up to the barrier holding back the faithful, greeting them and kissing babies handed to him.

During the Mass, Benedict will be given his Fisherman's Ring as well as the pallium which symbolizes his pastoral authority.

The Ceremony of Investiture, as it is called, will be celebrated by the senior cardinal deacon, Jorge Arturo Medina Estevez, the Chilean who on Tuesday proclaimed Benedict's name to the world from the basilica balcony.

The Mass is expected to draw world leaders, including German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder, as well as religious leaders including Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams. Bertolaso said there would be a few dozen fewer delegations compared to John Paul's funeral, and said Rome was gearing up for about 500,000 people.

Air space within a five-mile radius will be closed Sunday between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. (2 a.m. EDT and 10 a.m. EDT), and Italy's second airport, Ciampino, will be shut down starting midday Saturday until Sunday afternoon.

Officials are planning to set up giant screens in the Vatican area to allow pilgrims who cannot get into the square to follow the ceremony. The city also is preparing water supplies, medical assistance and bus shuttles to and from Rome's Termini station. Parking lots are being readied on the outskirts of the city.

In another sign Benedict intends to follow John Paul in reaching out to other religions, the new pope invited the chief rabbi of Rome, Riccardo di Segni, to the installation Mass. The rabbi will not be able to attend because Sunday is the first day of Passover, but he was pleased to be asked, said Riccardo Pacifici, a spokesman for Rome's Jewish community.

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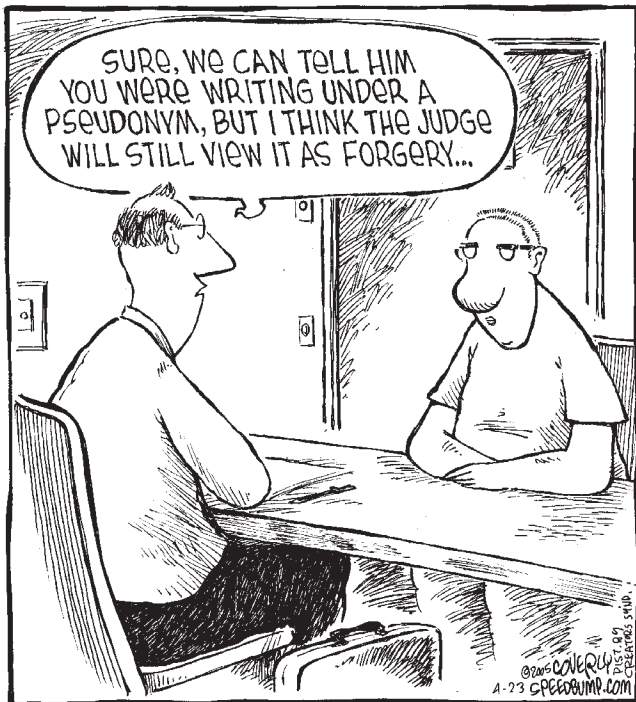
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- 33 "Monster" star
- 35 Scout leader?
- 38 Pizzeria sights
- 39 Fixed the piano
- 40 John — Garner

41 Position

42 Join

DOWN

- 1 Scales
- 2 Roster
- 3 Disgrace
- 4 Can't live without
- 5 Computer crash datum
- 6 Golfer Crenshaw
- 7 Bunyan tool
- 8 Nursery rhyme start
- 9 Star in Aquila
- 10 Sailor's worry

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